

**THE NEW YORK INSTITUTE OF METAPSYCHIATRY
P.A.G.L. FOUNDATION – WEST COAST AFFILIATE**

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Director

Newsletter

Year 9, No. 5

September, 1984

EDITORIAL

This Newsletter contains five thoughtful articles. First, Ann Linthorst deals with the question whether the study of Metapsychiatry can protect us from evil. Charles Gourgey clarifies the difference between cause-and-effect thinking and meaning. He sheds more light on the concept of meaning, which is one of the most important contributions of Metapsychiatry to the healing process. Joan Taylor presents her ideas on spiritual values and how they relate to work. Also included is Ann Linthorst's Bible study relevant to the healing of anxiety that was presented at the Summer Conference on Metapsychiatry. Finally, Joan Rubadeau gives us a practical example of an act of commitment to being here for God and the blessings this brings.

The School of Metapsychiatry will start the fall season with a series of courses and an Open House on September 16th. All are cordially invited. On this occasion the academic work of some of our students will be recognized. John Killen, a Research Associate of the Institute will address the meeting and present his ideas in spiritual principles applied in his profession as an architect. After the meeting, there will be registration for fall courses.

- Jan Linthorst, D.Min., Editor-in-Chief

PROTECTION . . . OR DOMINION?

By Ann Linthorst, M.Div.

When a student of Metapsychiatry has an "untoward" experience of disease or accident, the immediate reaction on the part of that student or other students often is: "How can this be happening? If we are good spiritual students, doesn't that give us protection against the dangers of the world?" It is important to look carefully at such reactions, for they reveal mistaken expectations of Metapsychiatry which need to be corrected.

Metapsychiatry is concerned with truth . . . the truth of being. Jesus promised, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The promise of spiritual realization is the promise of dominion over ignorance. It is not the promise of protection from ignorance. What is the difference?

We can discern three mistakes in a concern about protection from ignorance. First of all, this is a self-concern. One's thought is governed by the sense of self and the concern for its safety. Spiritual study then, remains secretly self-centered. One seeks truth for what it can offer selfhood. But where selfhood is, truth is not.

Secondly, the belief that if one is a "good" student, one will be protected by God from bad things is clearly a religious version of a child's perspective. The self is always, at root, a child in an adult universe, attempting to manipulate the Big People by its behavior. But, as Dr. Hora repeatedly reminds us, God is not a merit system. Life is not a matter of behaving well and being rewarded. Thought takes form in experience. If ignorant thought is cherished or hated or feared in consciousness, we can be sure of correspondingly ignorant (untoward) experiences.

Third, to desire protection from ignorance is to confirm ignorance as real, substantial, and dangerous. Once we have established, in consciousness, some real danger, we want to escape from it. When all else fails, there's always God. "There are no atheists in foxholes," the saying went during World War II. But that doesn't say much for the motives of the foxhole believers!

Dominion over ignorance is a different matter. It is, first of all, not self-concerned but truth-oriented. It is truth which has dominion over ignorance. Truth, when cherished in consciousness, tends to dissolve ignorance as light dissolves darkness. But, we may note, that happens when truth is cherished in consciousness, not when selfhood is cherished in consciousness.

Any untoward experience – or any experience, for that matter – is a picture of untrue beliefs about life. Truth does not manifest in experiences, but in a state of consciousness which we call PAGL. The spiritual path is not the path to good experiences. One student was shocked to discover that being a student of Metapsychiatry does not guarantee, as she puts it, "that the story will have a happy ending." God is not here for our stories. We are not here for our stories. A love of truth results in a loss of interest in personal stories, good or bad. We are so deeply imbued with the belief that life is personal experience that it may take a long time before we begin to realize that real Life is God and is entirely separate from the dreams of personal experience. And it may take longer still before we begin to love that Life more than we love personal experience.

Truth has absolute dominion over ignorance, because truth is the awareness of what really is, and ignorance is only thoughts about what seems to be but isn't. But truth is continually sabotaged by the self's concern to apply it to selfhood's problems. It is futile to ask, "How does the truth apply to my suffering?" The truth is that there is no you and there is no suffering. Therefore, we cannot ever know the truth ABOUT a problem; we can only know the truth INSTEAD OF the problem.

When we correctly ask that question of the meaning, we are setting the ignorance up to be addressed directly by truth, like bowling pins set up at the end of a straight, polished, well-lit lane. We are not confirming the ignorance as real or substantial or powerful; we are

simply clarifying the nature of the mistake. But the mistake still needs to be seen through. Identifying the mistake does not heal it.

The mistake is healed when it is released from consciousness. Only the activity of truth in consciousness can bring about the release of ignorance. And only the authentic love of spiritual good allows that good to dominate our awareness. The very fact that God is unavailable to our personal demands helps us get our values straight. When we discover that being devoted students is existentially irrelevant – God doesn't even know what good students we are! – then we are encouraged to become interested in enlightenment rather than good behavior.

Ultimately, we all must – and will – wake up to the truth of being and ask no more than to know it. All traditional mystical literature indicates that the soul, beholding its Source, finds complete fulfillment, spiritual bliss, perfect joy. Even the best personal story can't compete with the sense of blessedness (PAGL) which attends upon a realization of God as omniactive Love-Intelligence. "Rejoice not," said Jesus, "that the demons are subject to you. But rejoice that your names are written in heaven." In that rejoicing lies dominion over the demons and every other aspect of human ignorance.

CAUSE-AND-EFFECT THINKING

By Charles Gourney

And David said, "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" (I Samuel 17:29 (KJV))

David's lament is echoed by many beginning (and not-so-beginning) students of Metapsychiatry. After presenting an issue or asking a question, they are often surprised to learn that they have fallen into the error of cause-and-effect thinking. Some find this criticism difficult to understand: after all, is it not natural to look for reasons for things? Perhaps it is, but what is "natural" is not necessarily valid. Much confusion surrounds this issue, so let us investigate exactly what cause-and-effect thinking is, what is invalid about it, and the possibility of a valid alternative.

Let us begin with an excerpt from a recent telephone seminar:

Dr. Hora: So you want to know? But first you pretended to know already and gave a definition, right? What would be the meaning of that? Another knower?

Student: Yes, it is a form of wanting to be a knower. But I began to understand that when we were talking on the telephone seminar the other day, when Fern brought up the idea that the fantasies of our self-image are in some way sometimes a way of covering up the things that we have been so embarrassed for or enraged about seeing ourselves deprived of as children. Not only am I a knower; I compound that with trying to present myself in an image that I think is very wonderful.

Dr. Hora: Yes, now you are explaining why you seem to be a knower.

Student: Did you ask me if that was what I thought I was doing?

Dr. Hora: No, you are explaining why you are a knower and you are reasoning in the context of cause and effect. (Hora, 1983, 5-6)

This example illustrates the elusive nature of cause-and-effect thinking. The student does not even use the words “cause” or “because”; nevertheless, this type of thinking is present. To see it more clearly, we can paraphrase her statement as follows: I am a knower because I felt embarrassed as a child and I want to cover it up with an image that will impress people.

What is wrong with this statement? In an age when psychotherapy is so popular we are quite used to thinking this way. However, such causal statements are based upon a particular view of the world, a view that Metapsychiatry seriously questions.

Cause-and-effect thinking is simply the belief that our lives are governed by cause-and-effect relationships. More specifically:

A cause is a power that can act on its own, an agent that produces a consequence.

An effect is a change in the observable world that results from the activity of a cause. (Gourgey, 1984a, 26)

A cause may be a person, an event, or a thought. We usually believe that the powers that govern our lives come in one of these three forms. We can now see that cause-and-effect thinking is essentially the belief in the existence of many powers, which impact upon each other and influence each other in various ways. In Metapsychiatry this belief is called interaction thinking. (Hora, 1977)

Cause-and-effect thinking has a number of unfortunate consequences:

1. It is an escape from responsibility. If my problems have a cause external to my consciousness, then there is little I can do to change. A cause becomes justification of one's mode of being-in-the-world.
2. It encourages blame. If someone else (e.g. my parents) caused my problem, then I am practically obligated to find them guilty.
3. It encourages hopelessness. If my problem was caused by powers beyond my control, then I am thrown into a position of helplessness.
4. It encourages fear. It is a fearful thing to live in a world where hostile powers operate and threaten to victimize us at any moment.

To return to our example, the student claims she is a knower because some event in her

past created a need to define a certain self-image. If this were true, then change would be at best very difficult, perhaps impossible. Events in the past are out of reach; they cannot be changed. To ascribe the power of causality to a past event confers a false sense of reality on both the past event and the present problem. The search for causes thus reinforces invalid modes of being-in-the-world.

So when confronted with a problem, instead of asking “Why?” we ask “What is the meaning of what seems to be?” What is the meaning of being a knower? It expresses a self-confirmatory desire, a wish to influence others, to get them to think about us in a certain way. If I am a knower and recognize this, and am humble enough to find it embarrassing, then I can be healed. I don’t need to rummage through my past or to find excuses for it. All that I require is a sincere interest in understanding my mode of being-in-the-world.

The orientation toward meanings heals the negative consequences of cause-and-effect thinking. Since the meaning of a problem resides not in reality but in consciousness, it is within reach; we can respond to it. There is help and there is hope. And since the problem has no cause, there can be no one to blame. This realization makes forgiveness possible.

It is important not to confuse meanings with causes. The attempt to apply causal thinking to meanings is a common mistake. It results in superstitious thinking or a belief in personal mind power. (Hora, 1982; Gourgey, 1984b) The application of causal thinking to thoughts expresses the belief that thoughts have power. If thoughts did have power, then the problems that express them could not be healed. At best, we could only attempt to manage them operationally. The presence of healing is the strongest evidence against cause-and-effect thinking and the belief that thoughts have power.

This brings us to the final healing property of the orientation toward meanings: the healing of fear. Cause-and-effect thinking is a form of self-confirmatory ideation: it is an attempt to construct a world in which many powers exist. Such a world would be dangerous indeed. The recognition of meanings helps us understand that there is no such world. It therefore creates within our consciousness a space for God.

One can only fear that which has power. “The understanding of what really is, abolishes all that seems to be.” (Hora, 1977, 203) This principle teaches us that what appears as cause and effect, as experiences and problems, is not power. It is the activity of thoughts in consciousness, susceptible to correction and healing. Once the interest in meanings has awakened within us, this activity acquires a sense of direction, and becomes an evolution toward the realization of God as the only power. The transcendence of cause-and-effect thinking is the gateway to the awareness of the reality of God, and consequently to our own individual redemption.

CONFLICTING VALUES IN THE WORKPLACE

By Joan Taylor

Perhaps there is no greater illustration of the best and worst of human life than where I

earn my living. I am a screenwriter in Hollywood, California. Hollywood is a world of success, fame, recognition. It is also a world of greed and deceit and disappointment. The film industry is filled with dreams and nightmares, onscreen and off.

Fortunes change with a phone call. When it's good news, people attribute it to Lady Luck. When it's bad news, the fickle finger of fate has struck again. When the latter occurs, you're usually advised to change your agent. So you find a new one and you feel relieved. You're on the track now, a fresh beginning. And then you run into a more seasoned, cynical screenwriter or producer or actress friend and tell them your promising news and they just smile at you knowingly and say: "Don't worry, you'll find out soon enough. Changing agents is like changing deck chairs on the Titanic."

So in the midst of this duality – the good and the bad, the up and down, the hot and cold, the threats and promises – the question arises: Could God possibly live in Hollywood? For that matter, can He live where any of us work? Professional, non-professional, blue collar, white collar? Where we have to contend with our own wants and not wants, our co-workers' wants and not wants, our boss's wants and not wants?

Dr. Hora once said that society thinks we "are what we do," but that in truth, we "do what we are." What are we? What is our purpose? What is our real work? To be a beneficial presence. A beneficial presence is a channel through whom the love of God flows into the world, someone who is not seeing life as getting something out of the world for himself, but as letting something flow into the world through himself.

When we first begin our spiritual study, we attempt to fit this very beautiful idea into our existing ways of looking at the world. We try to see the obnoxious co-worker differently. We study him standing there at the Xerox machine. We remember what we've been told. "We are all living Souls, at various levels of realization." Hmmmm. Maybe he's not so bad when we begin to see him as an obnoxious living Soul . . .

We can also get very skilled at phrasing some of the new concepts to suit us. In Metapsychiatry, we've heard it said that a spiritual being "is concerned with what God wants." Somehow, if we really work at it, with a little juggling of logic and words here and there, we can figure out a way for God to want that promotion so that He and I can afford a new, top-of-the-line Porsche . . .

But as we move along, we see, as the Bible says, that we are only putting "new wine into old bottles." And so we begin to examine some of our dearly-held ideas about work, the ones we've had all our lives. Ambition, for instance. It used to be such a positive idea, and now it sounds so – so operational. Our solution is to hang back on the job. We become a "nice guy." Maybe we pick up the slack of a lazy boss. Maybe we lend money to a co-worker – and if we're really nice, we don't even ask for the money back. But it doesn't take long to see we are only being beneficent employees.

Something's still not working. And then we finally think we realize the problem. We're in the wrong business! How can we possibly soar with the eagles when we work with a bunch

of turkeys? We need to do work that is meaningful! The answer is to be a metapsychiatric counselor. That is the only way to really do this thing right . . . But sooner or later we see that our obstacle is exactly that. We've been "doing" instead of "being." And then it dawns on us. Maybe our real work is right where we are. Maybe we don't have to move an inch.

Being a beneficial presence has nothing to do with anything we've ever been before because it means leaving personal power behind, the idea that "I am responsible. It is up to me." This abandonment is a scary idea. I mean, it may be fine for upper-case Reality, but down here in lower-case reality, there is competition and aggression in the workplace and wouldn't a beneficial presence just get left in the dust?

On the contrary! A beneficial presence understands that it is up to God. When we work for God, and God works through us, we cut through the dust and dirt of interpersonal relationships, rivalry, and petty frictions. When God works through us, amazing things happen on the job.

First of all, our work begins to have far more meaning because we are slowly coming to see what God is – and isn't. God isn't a man who walks around with a suitcase deciding where and when not to set up residence. "Yes, he will reside at 2854 Santiago Boulevard because there is a Metapsychiatry practice going on here. "No, he will not reside at Hughes Aircraft because they make bombers, or at MGM Studios because they make movies about killer piranha fish." God is qualities. Peace, assurance, gratitude, love. PAGL. And when we truly understand this, qualities can live anywhere. All that is needed is one consciousness on the job to behold them.

When we are a beneficial presence, another thing occurs. There is less and less friction with the people we work with because we've removed the "I" and the "them" from the picture, and as a consequence we see PAGL at work instead of a bunch of bodies scrambling to collect a paycheck. Dr. Hora says, "Beholding an individual in the context of truth can have the effect of spiritual blessedness." He goes on to say, "It is helpful to remember that everyone is a place where God's presence reveals itself as Love-Intelligence. Everything in this universe is here for the purpose of manifesting the qualities of God. If we behold others as a place where God expresses His own nature, then we lose sight of the personal quirks and will lose sight of the human person, a distorted character."

Our ideas about ambition and "getting ahead" alter dramatically as well. When we allow ourselves to see that "the past is a dream, the future is a fantasy, and the present is imagination," we can embrace timelessness. Timelessness? In a world of 9 to 5, and day shifts and night shifts and overtime and time clocks? Yes – because when we are beneficial presences, we understand that the ebb and flow of our work day is a direct reflection of the thoughts we hold, moment to moment. This gives us an incredible opportunity to opt for spiritual power over personal power. Take the secretary with the tyrannical boss, for instance. Does she manage him, give in to his demands, step out of his way? Or does she step out of her own way and see herself and her boss in an entirely different light, as emanations of divine Mind where intelligence and clarity can shine through the fuzzy picture? This is when harmonious prospering begins and when our lives truly become good

and abundant. Spiritual power puts us in touch with a whole new freedom as the old notions about success and failure evaporate. We don't have to "make things happen" anymore because life is blooming through us and there is no greater happening than that.

In every way, our work is enhanced when we "be" instead of "do." Dr. Hora says, "Our destiny depends on the quality of our presence." That means the less we "do" our work, the less we tread water in the sea of mental garbage. The more we are a beneficial presence, the more God works through us on the job and the more buoyant we become in the ocean of Love-Intelligence. We come to see that work isn't work anymore – it's part of our destiny.

Following is a quote from "The Wasteland" by T.S. Eliot:

We shall not cease from exploration . . .
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And to know that place for the first time . . .

THE HEALING OF ANXIETY: A Spiritual Study

By Ann Linthorst, M.Div.

The great pitfall in being healed of anxiety is the desire to demonstrate personal control over the details of one's situation. When we can identify what we are anxious about, then our minds become filled with fantasies about how we can successfully manage the details. When there is no clear-cut personal solution, the anxiety gets worse and worse.

In II Chronicles 20, we find the story of a crisis in the lives of the people of Judah during the reign of King Jehoshaphat. This story provides an existentially valid paradigm for the healing of problems and anxiety. Following are excerpts from this chapter.

2. Then there came messengers and told Jehoshaphat, saying, "A great army has come against you from beyond the Red Sea; and, behold, they are encamping in Jericho . . ."

3. And Jehoshaphat feared, and he raised up his face to pray before the Lord and proclaimed a fast for all the inhabitants of Judah. And he said to them, "Gather yourselves together and come let us beseech the Lord our God."

(Note: the first response was turning to God, not calculating army strength, etc.)

6. And he prayed and said . . .

12. "O our God, make thyself known and judge them, for we have no strength to stand before them; bring upon them the sword of thy judgment, for we do not know what to do; but our eyes are upon thee."

(Note: Any attempt at self-confirmation is abandoned. The people acknowledge that they are helpless and don't know what to do. The simple recognition that we don't know what to do, can't do anything, personally, about a seeming problem is very relieving of anxiety and opens consciousness to healing truth.)

15. . . . thus says the Lord . . . "Be not afraid nor dismayed because of this great army; for the battle is not yours but God's . . ."

16. "Hasten, go down against them; behold they are coming up early in the morning . . ."

17. "and in that hour, stand still and see the salvation that the Lord will do for you, O Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; fear not, nor be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them; for the Lord God will help you."

(Note: God does not say, "That's okay, you can run away and hide while I take care of them." The people are required to face up to the seeming situation, to be there, "eyeball to eyeball." They are enabled to do this because their purpose there is not to defend themselves but to observe God in action and praise His wonderful works. Anxiety says: "Run away, hide, escape . . ." but God says, "Fear not . . . stand still and see the salvation that the Lord will do for you . . .")

18. Then Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground and worshipped; and all Judah . . . fell before the Lord, worshipping the Lord.

20. And they rose early in the morning and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa . . .

21. Then (Jehoshaphat) stood in the midst of the people and said, "Come, let us give thanks to the Lord, and give praise to the excellency of his holiness, as he is going forth before our enemies." And they said, "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endures forever." Then the hills began to give praise and the mountains began to rejoice.

(Note: The people do not say, "I'll believe it when I see it." They do not react with doubt or cynicism based upon an insistence on how things seem to be: "Yeah, but no matter how you slice it, we are vastly outnumbered and there's no way we can win." Again, they do not look at the human details at all. They keep their vision fixed on God. They are concerned only to see and celebrate the wonder and goodness and might of God. So great is their spiritual enthusiasm that they see the whole natural world as vibrant with the joy of spiritual truth.)

22. And when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir . . . and they were smitten.

23. For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them: and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another.

24. And when Judah came toward the watchtower in the wilderness, they looked to the

multitude, and, behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none had escaped.

(Note: Evil is self-defeating. Evil is phenomenal, meaning, it is a picture of thoughts. When we attempt to wrestle with phenomena, we make them seem substantial, real, powerful. When we see them as only phenomena and refuse to give these invalid thoughts mental energy, turning our attention to omniactive Love-Intelligence, then the phenomena HAVE NO OPTION BUT TO DISSOLVE.

A CELEBRATION

By Joan Rubadeau, M.A.

One day in a desperate attempt to turn away from resentful thoughts, I took a moment of silence and in that moment the idea came to me that I needed to celebrate God. I needed to spend the day celebrating the qualities of God present and available to me in my daily activities. I would celebrate beauty in gardening and vitality and joy in taking my small daughter swimming and love and abundance in cooking the evening meal. I would celebrate love and generosity in including enough food for a neighbor family also, since the woman had been very ill for weeks with no sign of improvement and her husband had mentioned that he was not much of a cook. In this manner, the day passed peacefully and fruitfully, and I went to bed grateful for my escape from anger and resentment.

The next day, the man next door came to bring me a note of gratitude from his wife for the chicken dinner. It was strikingly different from her usual tone as she tended to be rather bitter and complained a great deal. He also mentioned that she felt better for the first time and he thought the crisis was passed and she was on her way back to health at last. The thought came to me very clearly as I held the thank you note that she was healed by gratitude. In being grateful for the meal, in just that small turning away from her habitual interest in resentment, healing had taken place. I was filled with wonder and love and gratitude myself that such a small act when performed in the consciousness of the presence of God could be so beneficial. Together, the neighbor lady and I made a small space in consciousness, and Love rushed into that small space and enveloped us both. The real wonder was that I had been able to catch a glimpse of what it really means to be here for God.